

He said: It is just about two years since I introduced a resolution similar to this, and after a discussion which proceeded for the best part of two days, it was discovered that the motion was out of order. This time, however, I have worded my resolution in a different manner, and I hope that it will receive from the government a little more support than was accorded the previous one.

I do not intend to repeat the arguments I used two years ago in attempting to convince the house of the reasonableness of the proposal which I then made. I wish, however, to refer briefly to what I then said. In the first place I contended that if we had a properly planned economic system it would be possible to retire people at the age of sixty and give them a comfortable existence in their old age. I urged that in this country we had an abundance of everything which is required to make life worth while, but that on account of our chaotic system of distribution many of our people, particularly the older ones, were denied the means of a decent existence in their declining years.

At the outset I might give a concrete example of the possibility of having a large part of the population engaged at tremendous cost in activities which are not of a constructive or productive nature. Between 1914 and 1918 there were taken out of productive and useful employment in Canada approximately half a million of the flower of our manhood and our womanhood. They were engaged in destroying wealth; yet in spite of the fact that wealth was destroyed at a rate never known before in history, the rest of the population were able to keep these half million men in a state of efficiency for warfare in Europe. As a result we built up a huge financial debt which to-day is a heavy burden to the country, but I point to the example of the years 1914-18 to show that under certain circumstances we can maintain a relatively large proportion of the population in a fairly high state of military efficiency and still allow for the rest of the population a reasonably high standard of living.

I wish now to deal with some of the objections raised at that time by the Minister of Finance. His main objection was the one which naturally related to finance; he wondered where the money was to come from. That is the cry of every minister of finance, but as I have said in this house on many occasions, under certain conditions there is no difficulty about governments providing funds; if a war should break out or if we required increased armaments there would be no difficulty in providing the required funds for such purposes. It so happens that since the time I

[Mr. Heaps.]

last spoke on this question the government has increased the expenditures on armaments somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$15,000,000, and there was no question as to where the money was going to come from. I submit that when we raise questions with reference to social advancement we should not be met with that cry about where the money is to come from, for the moment we require money for increased armaments it can be found.

May I make a suggestion to the Minister of Finance. If he is anxious to provide funds for the financing of a scheme of old age pensions at a lower age than at the present time, it might not be a bad idea for him to nationalize two of the outstanding industries of the country—nothing new in the realm of politics so far as other countries are concerned. If he would nationalize the tobacco and the liquor industries the profits from both these sources would go a long way towards providing old age pensions to people who are now under seventy years of age. At the present time the liquor business in Canada is to a large extent under public ownership and control, and it would not be a wide step for the government to make it a complete federal public monopoly and to utilize the profits for the purpose of financing old age pensions at a lower age.

Let me deal with some of the figures submitted by the Minister of Finance two years ago. He stated that the number of persons of the age of seventy and over in receipt of pensions was 28.5 per cent. That figure, I believe, is accurate; but in fairness to the minister himself I suggest that it does not give a perfectly true picture of the exact percentage of persons of seventy and over who would have been entitled at that time to pensions had everybody been under the old age pensions scheme. When those figures were submitted to the house two years ago the province of Quebec had not yet come under the scheme. Since that province has come under it the figure has been increased, so that the percentage of persons over seventy in receipt of pensions from the government is now 37 instead of 28.5 as the minister informed us two years ago.

Mr. DUNNING: It is higher than that now; it is constantly going up.

Mr. HEAPS: It may be; the figures I gave were for one year ago. The minister also stated that the average income of persons of the age of sixty and over was \$1,072 per annum. If that was the case, if our older people of sixty and over were in receipt of